

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL
Held at ÁRAS AN CHONTAE, PROSPECT HILL
Monday, 27th April at 1.00pm

LEAS CATHAOIRLEACH:

Cllr. M. Hoade
Leas Cathaoirleach of the County of
Galway

I LATHAIR FREISIN:

Baill:

Comh. /Cllr. S. Broderick, D. Connolly, M. Connolly, S. Cunniffe, T. Ó Curraoin, P. Feeney, G. Finnerty, D. Geraghty, T. Grealish, L. Harney, C. Keane, D. Kelly, D. Killilea, P. Killilea, M. Lee, M. Maher, S. McHugh Ryan, A. Reddington, M. Regan, N. Thomas, O. Turner and T. Welby.

Baill ar líne:

Comh. /Cllr. I. Canning, J. Charity, G. Donohue, A. Harney, P. Keaveney, M. Kinane, G. King, M. Leainde, E. Mannion, J. McClearn, K. McHugh Farag, M. McNamara, E. F. Parsons and S. Walsh.

Oifigh:

Mr. L. Conneally, Chief Executive, Mr. Michael Owens, Director of Services, Mr. Uinsinn Finn, Director of Services, Ms. E. Ruane, Director of Services, Ms. K. O'Connor, Head of Finance, Mr. D. Mitchell, Director of Services, Ms. V. Loughnane Moran, Senior Planner, Ms. J. Brann Meetings Administrator, Ms. L. Keady, A/Senior Executive Officer, Ms. U. Ni Eidhin, Administrative Officer Ms. H.

Riordan, Staff Officer, Ms. C. Connolly Staff Officer.

Thosnaigh an cruinniú leis an paidir.

The Elected Members contesting the upcoming bye-election were wished every success by the Leas Cathaoirleach.

ITEM NO.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

4715

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Killilea **SECONDED** by Comh. O Curraoin the minutes of the Monthly Plenary Meeting held on 23rd March 2026 were **AGREED**.

ITEM NO.2 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4716

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan the minutes of the Corporate Policy Group held on 16th March 2026 were **NOTED**.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington the minutes of the Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 3rd December 2025 were **NOTED**.

Cllr. Donohue raised the following point and query:

- Further to item 6, an update was requested on the County/City Economic Development Strategy, as consultants were due to be confirmed following the December meeting.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Grant Thornton are the appointed consultants for the County/City Economic Development Strategy. Stakeholder engagement is taking place with the

assistance of the economist from the Northern & Western Regional Authority (NWRA). The draft document will be brought before the Elected Members.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. O Curraoin **SECONDED** by Cllr. Broderick the minutes of the Physical Development, Transportation and Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee Meeting held on 10th December 2025 were **NOTED**.

Cllr. Donohue raised the following point and query:

- An update was sought on a previous motion requesting a targeted leaflet drop to inform landowners of their responsibilities in relation to roadside trees.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Leaflet drops in targeted areas will be carried out. He will ask the Senior Engineer to contact Cllr. Donohue directly on this matter.
- Areas of specific concern may be raised at Municipal District level.

ITEM NO.3 TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT THE UNAUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2025. **4717**

The Unaudited Annual Financial Statement for Galway County for the year ended 31st December 2025 was published to the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Ms. O' Connor, Director of Service Finance spoke on the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement (AFS) for 2025 that was circulated to the Elected Members in advance of the meeting. The statement has been presented to the Audit Committee and Corporate Policy Group (CPG). The Statement was prepared within the Accounting Code of Practice and Accounting Regulations for Local Authorities in Ireland, and under the directions of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The primary financial statements which make up the AFS are the Statement of Accounting Policies, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Funds Flow and Notes and Appendices to the Financial Statements. The External

Auditor will examine the accounts, however significant change is not expected. The Unaudited AFS will be brought before the Members in September as the Audited Annual Financial Statement.

The Executive is requesting that the Elected Members:

- a) Adopt the enclosed figures to formally close the accounts for 2025.
- b) Approve the transfers to / from reserves as detailed in Note 14 of the accounts.
- c) Approve the over / under expenditure by division as noted in Note 16 of the accounts.

Cllr. Regan raised the following points and queries:

- Clarification was sought on the amount of rates outstanding from the previous year.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. O'Connor:

- Uncollected rates have reduced, and the rate base has increased.
- The Council is working with Tailte Éireann to ensure accurate property valuations for rating purposes.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The Council's collection rates are above national average.
- The Council is mindful of the need to balance effective rate collection with the sustainability of local businesses.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington it was **AGREED** to adopt the figures as detailed in the Unaudited Annual Financial Statement for Galway County Council for the year ended 31st December 2025 to formally close the accounts for 2025.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Lee **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Ryan it was **AGREED** to approve the transfers to / from reserves as detailed in Note 14 of the accounts.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. O Curraoín **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Ryan it was **AGREED** to approve the over / under expenditure by division as noted in Note 16 of the accounts.

ITEM NO.4 TO CONSIDER A REPORT TO AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA UNDER SECTION 37(E)(4) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000, AS AMENDED ON THE FOLLOWING - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: CONSTRUCTION OF AN OPEN-CYCLE GAS TURBINE POWER PLANT, PRIMARILY FUELED BY NATURAL GAS, ABOVE GROUND INSTALLATION AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT, LOCATED WITHIN COLLNAGROAGH AND RATHMORRISSY (TOWNLANDS), ATHENRY, CO. GALWAY ACP – 324113-26.

4718

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Ms. Loughnane Moran, Senior Planner spoke on the report. The proposed development of the Cashla Peaker Plant is for the construction of an open cycle gas turbine plant, primarily fuelled by natural gas and ancillary development, including a substation and connection from the substation to the existing Cashla substation. The report was prepared within the legislative requirements of 37(E) of the Planning and Development Act. The report contains a description of the proposed development, site location, planning policy, relevant planning history, enforcement information relating to the subject site, designated sites, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAR), Water Framework Directive, planning considerations, recommended conditions and includes a Road and Transportation Report. The report also includes a recommendation that it would be appropriate for An Coimisiún Pleanála to require the applicant to provide and implement a community gain proposal.

A presentation has already been made to the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District (MD), the chair of which has prepared a statement on the proposed development which will be included in the report to be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála. She undertook to note any comments made at this meeting and attach them to the submitted report also.

The Chief Executive informed the Elected Members that Galway County Council are not the decision-making authority for this application.

Cllr. Keane read out the following on behalf of the Members of the Athenry Oranmore Municipal District:

'As Members of Galway County Council representing the Athenry Municipal District, we are aware of the importance of our area in the context of infrastructure investment, industrial development and balanced regional development. We are aware of the need for a sustainable, secure energy supply and a robust electricity grid network.

To that end, Galway county has played a significant part in developing our energy supply. We host a number of wind and solar farms with more in the pipeline. We have an existing large gas powered electricity plant and an application for another. The possibility of offshore wind development remains, despite recent decisions.

Regarding the present proposal, the Cashla Peaker Plant, SID Case Ref 324113 we have a number of serious concerns regarding its development.

Environmental Concerns

The proposed site is in close proximity to Athenry town. Prevailing winds would direct any emissions towards a growing town of 5,000 people with daily student numbers of 3,500 in five schools. There is a significant residential zoning in the adjacent townland of Ballygurrane which will have the effect of extending the town towards the Peaker Plant site.

We are conscious that this project is made up of 3 separate applications 1) the plant 2) the substation and pipeline and 3) the gas pipeline. We request that An Coimisiún Pleanála considers the cumulative impact of the entire project in making its decision. We also request that An Coimisiún considers the emission levels in the context of the 700ha of land earmarked for industrial development within a 10km radius of the site. Will the operation of the Peaker Plant restrict development on these lands in the future under the cumulative effect provision? These lands are located at Ballygurrane (Athenry), Tubberoe (Athenry) IDA and Department of Defence (Oranmore), Galway Airport site (Carmore).

In addition, a gas-fired peaker plant was refused planning permission in the same general area in 2009 on concerns regarding air pollution, among others. We request that this decision be taken into account in the consideration of this application.

Economic Corridor

The site is located in the Galway – Athenry economic corridor (Galway County Development Plan) which has had major investment over the decades in transport, industrial development sites and housing. We are concerned that siting one of the largest power plants of its type in the centre of this corridor will diminish the attractiveness of this nationally important area to significant projects and investments.

IDA Site

Some of the closest lands to the Peaker Plant site is owned by the IDA. There has been significant investment in this site and an adjoining section of the IDA lands is the subject of a €300m multinational investment. We have concerns that this wider land holding will have its value and attractiveness eroded by the proximity of the power station.

Local Services

We have concerns that the level of emergency services in the area are inadequate to deal with any emergencies on-site. The storage of 6.2 million litres of diesel in conjunction with a major gas main creates a considerable fire risk and would challenge greatly the local fire services. This site will be a Lower Tier COMAH site under the Seveso Directive, resulting in a higher requirement for both emergency planning and capacity to deal with any emergency which may occur.

Impact on Local Roads and Road Safety

While the site is adjacent to the motorway it is served by local roads only. We have concerns around the construction and operation of the plant and the impact it will have on the L roads serving the site, the HGVs using the route and the increased road and safety issues which will arise.

We request that an Coimisiún Pleanála take the above concerns into account in arriving at its decision on a project which would have a significant impact on the local area, local residents and the economic development of this key area of Galway.'

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keane **SECONDED** by Cllr. Feeney it was **AGREED** to approve the report to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37(E)(4) of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended on the following - Proposed Development: Construction of an open-cycle gas turbine power plant, primarily fueled by natural gas, above ground installation and ancillary development, located within Collnagroagh and Rathmorrissy (townlands), Athenry, Co. Galway ACP – 324113-26

Cllrs. Feeney, Broderick, McNamara, Grealish and Cunniffe raised the following points and queries:

- The proposed development site is located on the edge of Athenry town and had been previously earmarked for development. It was questioned whether the site was selected solely on the basis that it is currently for sale.
- While there is recognition of the need to move away from fossil fuels, it is essential that such developments are appropriately located. The siting of a large power plant in close proximity to a town was not considered suitable.
- It was emphasised that community concerns must be fully considered.
- There is unanimous agreement among the Members of the Municipal District in respect of this submission.
- Athenry town is growing and expanding. Concern was raised that the pipes may prohibit future potential development.
- The suitability of the site was questioned and concerns were raised regarding site access and regress to the site.
- The current zoning of the land was enquired of. Lack of national guidelines or energy strategy was criticised.
- It was asked if reference to a previous refused application for a powerplant in the area could be included in the report.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. Loughnane:

- It is national policy to support development in the move away from fossil fuels.
- The decision on the application will be made by An Coimisiún Pleanála.
- The report outlines the governing national, regional and local guidelines.
- There exists some confusion between wind, solar and natural gas guidelines.
- The site is unzoned and it is within the economic corridor.
- The previous application that was mentioned was from 2009, although it was not an application. A development was discussed but didn't reach application stage. She agreed that it would be referenced in the report to be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

The Members agreed that reference to the previous proposal in 2009 be included in the report that is to be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

ITEM NO. 5. TO FIX A VENUE FOR THE MAY ORDINARY MEETING OF PLENARY COUNCIL. **4719**

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. McHugh Ryan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Grealish it was agreed that the May Ordinary Meeting of Plenary Council will be held on 25th May at 11am in the Claregalway Hotel, Claregalway, Co. Galway. The Members were informed that this meeting will be an in-person meeting and it would not be possible to attend remotely.

ITEM NO. 6 TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT THE ANNUAL REPORT 2025 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 221(1) (A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 **4720**

The Annual Report 2025 was published to the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Owens, Director of Services introduced the Draft Annual Report for 2025 which was previously considered at Corporate Policy Group (CPG). He gave an overview of the contents of the report which is now before the Elected Members. He asked that it be considered and approved by the Members. Once approved, the report will be translated, published to the Council website and available in public libraries.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. D. Killilea **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington the Annual Report 2025 in accordance with section 221(1) (A) of the Local Government Act 2001 was **AGREED**.

ITEM NO.7 TO CONSIDER AND IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE AUTHORISE THE ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142(5A) OF

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4721

Report dated 16th April 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Turner **SECONDED** by Cllr. McHugh Ryan it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Parsons to attend 'Association of Irish Regions Training Seminar 2026' at Inishowen Gateway Hotel, Buncrana, Co. Donegal on 25th & 26th February 2026. (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. L. Harney **SECONDED** by Cllr. Grealish it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllr. Maher to attend 'AILG Elected Members Training Programme March 2026 Module 2 – "Overview of New Housing for all Action Plan and Tenancy Rights Implications for Local Authorities and Councillors' at Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo on 21st March 2026 (Retrospective Approval).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. M. Connolly **SECONDED** by Cllr. Regan it was **AGREED** to authorise Cllrs. Turner, Maher & Mc Hugh Ryan to attend 'AILG Annual Training Conference 2026' at Hotel Minella, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary on 22nd & 23rd April 2026 (Retrospective Approval).

ITEM NO.8 TO NOTE THE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES ATTENDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 142 (5F) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4722

Report dated 16th April 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Lee **SECONDED** by Cllr. Reddington the Summary of Proceedings of conferences attended were **NOTED**.

ITEM NO.9 TO APPROVE THE ATTENDANCE OF A DELEGATION FROM GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL TO ATTEND THE UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS

CERTIFICATE CEREMONY AND ASSOCIATED BUSINESS MEETINGS AND EVENTS.

4723

Report dated 20th April 2026 was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Grealish it was **AGREED** to authorise Cathaoirleach Cllr. D. Collins to attend UNESCO Global Geoparks Certificate Ceremony in Paris, France on 27th April 2026. The Director of Service Mr. Liam Hanrahan and Heritage Officer Ms. Marie Mannion will accompany the Cathaoirleach to the ceremony.

ITEM NO. 10. TO CONSIDER THE MANAGEMENT REPORT – APRIL 2026 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 136(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 (AS AMENDED).

4724

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

The Management Report – April 2026, in accordance with Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001 (As Amended) was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Mary Hoade, Leas Cathaoirleach spoke on her recent trip to Coventry to attend the Galway Association Coventry 59th Annual Dinner and Dance with Ms. Katie O'Connor, Director of Services. She spoke of the importance of maintaining connections with those that have emigrated from Galway.

Cllrs. Donohue, D. Killilea, D. Connolly, Geraghty & A. Harney raised the following points and queries:

- Compliments were extended to the Gort Area Office staff for the repairs that were carried out to the road verge and culvert at Cappard, Gort.
- Thanks were extended to the organisers of the recent official opening of the Michael McGrath Sensory Garden in Palace Grounds, Tuam.
- The serious level of anti-social behaviour in Ballinasloe was highlighted. The first meeting of the Anti-Social Behaviour Taskforce has taken place. It was

asked that resources be allocated to the taskforce to deal with the anti-social problems.

- It was asked that a second Housing Liaison Officer (HLO) be appointed to Ballinasloe.
- The Council must play its part in remedying the situation in Ballinasloe.
- It was asked if those causing anti-social behaviour in Ballinasloe can be removed.
- A co-ordinated approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour is required.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- The official opening of the Michael McGrath Sensory Garden in Palace Grounds, Tuam, will be included in the May Management Report.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Mitchell:

- Assured the Members that the Executive are intensely aware of the problems in Ballinasloe. The Elected Members were the driving force behind setting up the Task Force.
- The HLOs work on the ground and there is a close relationship between them, the Tenancy & Estate Management Team and the Gardaí.
- If tenants do not conform with the conditions as set out in the Tenancy Handbook this may lead to eviction.
- It is difficult to resolve problems that originate from outside Ballinasloe town.
- He assured the Members that the Council are aware of and are engaging to resolve the issues as soon as possible.

ITEM NO. 11 UPDATE ON THE N6 GALWAY CITY RING ROAD

4725

Report was published on the Extranet prior to the meeting.

Mr. Finn, Director of Services gave the Elected Members an update on the N6 Galway City Ring Road. The application to An Bord Pleanála (now An Coimisiún Pleanála) for scheme of the Galway City Ring Road (N6-GCRR) was initially lodged in 2018. The

decision was subsequently quashed under Judicial Review and An Coimisiún Pleanála, after reassessing the scheme including assessment of updated and additional further information have now approved the scheme and the making of the CPO. The Chief Executive and Director answered questions from Elected Members including clarification on the respective roles of the County Council, the City Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). It was clarified that under a Section 85 agreement made between the City Council and County Council, Galway County Council were appointed the lead authority for the project. The steering group consists of TII, Galway City and Galway County Councils.

The Chief Executive expanded that this is the most important piece of infrastructure for Galway City and County. The 18km road will remove Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) from the city which will allow the city to grow. This in turn will benefit the commercial, retail and residential sectors in the wider Galway Metropolitan Area. He welcomed the positive decision from An Coimisiún Pleanála. He hopes that the ring road will proceed without further challenge, to allow the project to move to design procurement and construction.

Cllrs./ Comh. D. Killilea, O Curraóin & Mannion raised the following points and queries:

- The positive response from An Coimisiún Pleanála was widely welcomed.
- The timelines for the project were asked.
- Members expressed disappointment with the selected route, citing the potential displacement of a significant number of families. It was asked whether the impacted households would be granted planning permission for alternative accommodation.
- Homeowners along the agreed route must be engaged with.
- Appreciation was expressed for the work and commitment of Council staff over the lifetime of the project.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Any Judicial Review must be lodged within eight weeks of the notification of the ACP decision in the local papers

- If a Judicial Review is not lodged, then project construction is anticipated to commence in the period 2028 to 2031.
- There has been continuous consultation between landowners and the NRO.
- The GCRR is only part of the solution to traffic congestion in Galway City, along with BusConnects, Active Travel and public transport.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- During the early stages of the process, 8 potential routes were assessed. Following public consultation, a preferred route was established. The decision on the final route was made by Reserved Function by both City Council and County Councils. These decisions allowed the process to move forward with the chosen route.

Cllrs. Welby, Leainde, & Thomas raised the following points and queries:

- People affected by the GCRR were encouraged to contact the Council.
- Resolution must be reached with those opposed to the GCRR.
- Attention must now be given to addressing the shortcomings of the R336.
- The decision has provided clarity for the homeowners affected and this is welcomed. They must be assisted by the Council.
- It was asked what the timelines would be should an appeal be lodged.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The Council will be in direct communication with homeowners.
- The GCRR application underwent a thorough and comprehensive assessment, including consideration of the Climate Act.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Letters will issue shortly to property owners impacted by the decision.
- The public are invited to make contact with the Project Office.
- We will seek a mutually agreed pathway forward.

Cllrs. Feeney, Regan & Keane raised the following points and queries:

- It was asked if a special unit will be established to carry out engagement with property owners.
- The GCRR will create capacity for other transport solutions.
- Those impacted should be accommodated close to their current homes.
- It was asked what supports will be offered to ensure that those affected may remain in their communities.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Two additional senior staff members have been allocated to the National Roads Office and additional resources will be allocated to this office.
- An established process will be adhered in relation to the properties impacted.
- Any subsequent planning applications will be considered on their merits but e Planning Departments which is a separate statutory process.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Upgrade works on the R336 were delayed until a decision was made on the N6 GCRR.
- The GCRR will allow Galway to develop sustainably and improve walking and cycling routes, making it a safer place.

Cllrs./ Comh. Walsh, O Curraóin, King & Hoade raised the following points and queries:

- The decision from An Coimisiún Pleanála is welcomed.
- While the Ring Road is needed, the selected route serves only South Connemara.
- It was asked if the N59 to Clifden road is fit for purpose.

- The key message from the Council is that it maintains an open-door policy for all those impacted by the ring road.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Expressed his thanks to the Members for their contributions.
- The GCRR will allow the city to grow which will facilitate community and economic gain.
- The ring road has the financial support of government.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- There has been a lot of engagement with landowners, especially through oral hearings. The Project Office will work with them. There is a dedicated website and the office welcomes engagement from homeowners.
- This project represents the collective efforts of many people over the last two decades.
- Work on the design and procurement elements of the project will continue even if a Judicial Review is lodged. Any subsequent Judicial Review should not delay the project, as work will proceed in parallel.

ITEM NO. 12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS & CORRESPONDENCE. 4726

The following items of correspondence which were published on the extranet prior to the meeting were **NOTED**:

- Letter dated 16.12.2025 from Galway County Council to Commission for Communication Regulation – Resolution letter – Issues with Mobile Phone Coverage.
- Letter dated 30.01.2026 from Commission for Communication Regulation – Reply to Resolution letter dated 16.12.2025.

- Letter dated 04.03.2026 from Jean Brann, County Secretary, Galway County Council to Commission for Communication Regulation – Follow up to Reply dated 16.12.26.
- Letter dated 16.04.2026 from Commission for Communications Regulation – Reply to Letter from Jean Brann, County Secretary dated 04.03.2026.
- Letter dated 04.03.2026 to An Taoiseach Michéal Martin – Resolution Letter – Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- Letter dated 11.03.2026 from Department of An Taoiseach – Acknowledgement of Resolution letter dated 04.03.2026 - Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- Letter dated 04.03.2026 to An Taoiseach Michéal Martin – Resolution letter – Increase provision of Irish Medium Education.
- Letter dated 11.03.2026 from Department of An Taoiseach – Acknowledgement of Resolution letter dated 04.03.2026 – Increase in Irish Medium Education.
- Letter dated 04.03.2026 to An Taoiseach Michéal Martin – Resolution Letter – Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – circulated to Oireachtas Members.
- Email dated 06.04.2026 from Deputy John Connolly TD – Reply to circulation of Resolution letter dated 04.03.2026 - Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- Letter dated 10.03.2026 from Galway County Council to Bord Bia – Resolution – Urgent Meeting to instigate dialogue.
- Email dated 15.04.2026 from Michelle Jordan, Senior Agri Food Communications Executive, Bord Bia – reply to Resolution letter dated 10.03.2026.
- Letter dated 10.03.2026 to Minister Martin Heydon – Resolution letter – Urgent Meeting to instigate dialogue.
- Email dated 19.03.2026 from Maria Rigney, Private Secretary to Minister Heydon – Reply to Resolution letter dated 10.03.2026.
- Letter dated 26.01.2026 from Tanya Whyte, Assistant Director/Senior Planner, Planning and Economic Development, Northern & Western Regional

Assembly – Notification of Review of Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for NWRA 2020-2032.

- Letter dated 07.04.2026 to Mr James Browne, Minister for Housing Local Government & Heritage – Resolution letter – Short term letting.
- Email dated 09.04.2026 from Megan Woods, Private Secretary to Minister Browne – acknowledgement of Resolution Letter – Short Term Letting.
- Letter dated 07.04.2026 to Coillte – Resolution letter – Coillte Financial Contribution.

Cllrs. L. Harney & Regan raised the following points and queries:

- Dissatisfaction was expressed at the recent response from ComReg to Council correspondence on poor network coverage. A consistent level of service is required.
- 3 unsatisfactory responses have been received from ComReg.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The drafted response to ComReg will be given to Cllr. Regan and Cllr. L. Harney in advance of it being issued to ComReg.

ITEM 13. QUESTION Cllr. Donohue

4727

Cllr. Donohue submitted the following question to the meeting:

'To ask the Chief Executive to outline for the Council how the new Complaints Procedure developed by the County and City Management Association in conjunction with the Ombudsman will be implemented by Galway County Council'.

The following reply issued:

The new Customer Complaints Procedure and Protocol will be implemented through its inclusion in the Customer Service Action Plan, adopted by the Members on 26th

January 2026, which underpins the organisation's commitment to delivering good customer service. Rollout will take place in 2026, led by the Customer Services Officers Group, a cross-directorate group ensuring consistent implementation across all Units. A standardised complaints-tracking system is already in use organisation-wide, with quarterly reporting to Management Team underway.

The Ombudsman has developed a Complaints Handling Training e-module, and we are liaising with the Ombudsman's Office to enable this module to be hosted within our network so that all staff can complete the training. Galway County Council will also participate in the Ombudsman's quarterly Complaints Standards Network to support best practice and strengthen complaint handling across the organisation

ITEM 14. QUESTION Cllr. Cunniffe

4728

Cllr. Cunniffe submitted the following question to the meeting:

'To ask the Chief Executive for a detailed update on negotiations between Government and Galway County Council to correct the systematic inherent deficiency in funding we receive and to achieve a commensurate amount of LPT Equalisation Funding or other monies to allow Galway County Council to provide a baseline of services given our geographic area, population, local road network and other service needs.

Please include information on meetings held subsequent to 24th March and the participants, can you also provide a copy of the information GCC presented in any meetings held.'

The following reply issued:

As the Elected Member is aware, Galway County Council has engaged with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) over a number of years in relation to the persistent and systemic funding deficit facing the authority.

In the period up to and including 2026, a number of reports and correspondence have been issued by Galway County Council to the DHLGH outlining the scale and implications of this funding deficiency.

More recently, a number of further actions have been undertaken, including the following:

- Following correspondence issued to the Assistant Secretary (AS) in the DHLGH on 10 December 2025, a further letter was issued on 16 February 2026 at the request of the Members. This correspondence reiterated the ongoing funding challenges facing Galway County Council
In this letter, it was highlighted to the DHLGH that at both the Budget 2026 meeting and the January 2026 Plenary meeting, Councillors expressed concern that the current approach to the redistribution of central Government resources is “systematically failing County Galway”.
- On 30 March 2026, a Joint Oireachtas Meeting was convened in the Council Chamber, attended by a representative group nominated by Plenary. Nineteen Oireachtas Members were invited.
The principal agenda item for the meeting was “to correct the underfunding allocated to Galway County Council by Central Government”.
The presentation focused on
 - the extent to which Galway County Council is structurally underfunded relative to comparator local authorities and national benchmarks, including having one of the lowest levels of spend per capita;
 - the impact of ongoing funding shortfalls on the Council’s ability to deliver services; and
 - key recommendations and the critical next steps required to address the funding imbalance.
- It was agreed at this meeting that Minister Seán Canney TD would arrange a meeting with the DHLGH Minister James Browne TD, to further progress these matters. We await confirmation of this meeting date.
- In addition, the Chief Executive followed up the above correspondence through a telephone engagement with the Assistant Secretary in the DHLGH.

Cllr. Hoade, Leas Cathaoirleach confirmed that following the meeting held on 30th March, Minister Canney undertook to seek a meeting with the Minister James Browne TD. The Director of Finance provided a clear document at the meeting, stating the Council's asks.

Cllr. Cunniffe spoke on his motion. Non-government Councillors are not privy to the processes that take place. There has been no update since the meeting of 30th March. We need to know the current situation to be able to lobby our TDs. Copies of the presentation were not circulated to the Elected Members following the meeting.

Cllrs. Donohue, D. Connolly & Geraghty raised the following points and queries:

- Dissatisfaction was expressed at the lack of update following the meeting.
- The presentation given at the meeting has not been circulated to the Elected Members.
- No further updates have been provided on Dunguaire Castle.
- There is a huge funding deficit in Galway County Council, resources are needed to deliver services. Galway TDs need to bring this message back to government.
- The recent comments from the previous Taoiseach regarding rural Ireland, are out of touch with reality.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Stated that the meeting with the Oireachtas Members as requested by the Elected Members, took place on the 30th March.
- Outlined that he and Director Mr. Owens met with Minister Burke and have provided him with the detail of the project at Dunguarie Castle, the ask of Galway County Council and the cost estimate for capital works.
- The Executive will continue its efforts until funding is secured.

- Indicated that Galway County Council are awaiting a funding announcement from Fáilte Ireland for capital tourism projects, to which it is our intention to apply.
- On a general Council funding point a larger amount from the Equalisation Fund and Local Property Tax (LPT) is required.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Owens:

- At the meeting the Minister committed to part funding the Dungaigue project through Failte Ireland funding.
- A meeting is due to be held with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in mid-May.
- Also, a date in May is to be agreed for a meeting with the Office of Public Works (OPW).
- Following these meetings, we will revert to the Minister on the remaining funding required of the overall €5m cost.

ITEM 15. QUESTION Cllr. Reddington

4729

Cllr. Reddington submitted the following question to the meeting:

"In regards to the septic tank grant there are three criteria to qualify

DWWTS grant under the National Inspection

DWWTS grant in Prioritised Areas for Action

DWWTS grant in High Status objective Catchment Area

If a householder does not qualify under the above criteria would an engineers report which will state that the septic tank is not operating correctly suffice to qualify for the grant"?

The following reply issued:

Grants for Domestic Waste Water Treatment systems (DWWTS) are available under three separate schemes as outlined below:

1. **DWWTS grant under the National Inspection plan (NIP)** – Under the National Inspection Plan 2022–2026, septic tanks are selected based on a risk-based approach prioritizing areas where systems pose the highest threat to public health or environmental water quality. 105 random septic tank inspections are carried out every year in agreed priority areas by Galway County Council inspectors. It is only when an inspection has been carried out that a grant for septic tank upgrades can be applied for.

2. **DWWTS grant in a Prioritised Area for Action** - In order to be eligible for this grant, the DWWTS serving a house must be situated in a Prioritised Area for Action in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027, and the applicant must have received a letter from the Local Authority Waters Programme Office (LAWPRO) on behalf of the local authority, confirming eligibility to apply for a grant.

3. **DWWTS grant in a High-Status Objective Catchment Area** - In order to be eligible for this grant, the DWWTS serving a house must be situated in a High-Status Objective Catchment Area in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027, and the applicant must have received a letter from the local authority confirming eligibility to apply. The link to the maps identifying the High Status Objective Catchment area is set out below.

At present there is no other grant scheme open to the public for DWWTS even with the benefit of an Engineers report confirming that the septic tank is not operating correctly.

[High Status Objective Catchment Areas](#)

Cllrs. Reddington, Kelly, McHugh Ryan, Geraghty, Mannion, Grealish, L. Harney, Regan, Donohue & Thomas raised the following points and queries:

- The eligibility criteria for this grant are overly prescriptive, which may be misleading to the public.
- It was asked if our Oireachtas Members are making representations on this matter.
- Clarity on the qualifying criteria was requested.
- A question was raised as to why condemned septic tanks did not qualify on environmental grounds.
- It was asked that a motion be sent to the Department, requesting that all septic tanks be eligible for grant funding.
- The Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) have written to Minister O'Sullivan on this matter. The response received stated that the scheme is being reviewed. The grant is currently available in targeted areas to ensure highest impact.
- Amending the criteria to allow for the acceptance of engineers' reports would be a more realistic approach than attempting to include every septic tank.
- If every home was eligible under this scheme, would holiday homes be included.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Ms. Ruane:

- This topic is raised at SPC regularly.
- Regulations are in place to protect the environment.
- She will correspond with the department, as per the Members request.

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee:

'I propose that Galway County Council write to the Department to ensure all County Galway is included to qualify for grants re domestic wastewater treatment.'

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Regan **SECONDED** by Cllr. Lee the above motion was **AGREED**.

ITEM 16. NOTICE OF MOTION

4730

Cllr. Mairtín Lee submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

“Tá mé ag moladh go gcuirfidh Comhairle Contae na Gaillimhe litir ag an tÚdarás Náisiúnta Iompair ag iarraidh orthú seirbhís breise a chuir ar seirbhís bus an 424 go háirithe ag an am is gnóthaí a bhíonn siad. Ba cheart dhoibh freisin an seirbhís bus cathratach a chuir amach chomh fada le Bearna, chun cuid don ualach a thógail ón seirbhís an 424.

I am proposing that Galway County Council send a letter to the National Transport Authority requesting that they add additional services to the 424 service, particularly at the busiest times. They should also extend the city bus service as far as Bearna, to take some of the pressure off the 424 service”.

Cllrs./ Comh Lee, Keane & O Curraoín raised the following points and queries:

- The 424 bus is overcrowded. Commuters are being left on the side of the road.
- There needs to be an increase in both frequency and capacity on the route especially early morning and evenings.

The above motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Lee **SECONDED** by Cllr. Keane and **AGREED**.

ITEM 17. NOTICE OF MOTION

4731

Cllr. Thomas Welby submitted the following Notice of Motion prior to the meeting:

“This Council agrees that the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) providing additional rights to multinational corporations to sue the state outside of ordinary legal systems we currently have will undermine EU social, health and environmental standards. This Council acknowledges that many of the trade

elements are already in place and does not need the addition of corporations being able to sue the Irish government through the Investor Court System (ICS) when any new laws affect their profits. This council stands against the Investor Court System (ICS) and calls this constituency a CETA-Free Zone.

This Council resolves to write to the Minister for Trade, the Minister for Local government and the Taoiseach to outline this position. It further resolves to publicise the council's concerns about CETA and to circulate this motion with other Councils as correspondence for consideration".

This item was deferred until the May plenary meeting.

ITEM NO. 18 CATHAOIRLEACH'S BUSINESS

4732

The Leas Cathaoirleach reminded the Members that the Cathaoirleach Awards are being held on 8th May at 18:30 in the Raheen Woods Hotel in Athenry.

Also, that the Cathaoirleach Ball in support of Epilepsy Ireland and Breast Cancer Research is being held on 31st May at 19:00 in the Raheen Woods Hotel in Athenry. She congratulated everyone involved in the recent designation of Joyce County and Western Lakes as a UNESCO Global Geopark.

Cllr Feeney highlighted that former Councillor Seán Ó Tuairisg was heavily involved in this project and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to him thanking him for his work in achieving the designation.

The following motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Thomas **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cunniffe:

'That Galway County Council writes to the Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, Jack Chambers TD requesting that the new hospital buildings planned for Galway University Hospital – whose development and control plan DCP, has been approved and is ready to be delivered – be designated as Critical Infrastructure (or otherwise given an equivalent

strategic priority status) to enable an accelerated pathway for approval, funding allocation, procurement and delivery, in order to address urgent and growing healthcare capacity needs across Galway and the wider West/North-West region.

I would also request that this motion be forwarded to all other Local Authorities in the wider West/North-West region to ask that they also submit this motion or a similar one.'

The Leas Cathaoirleach outlined as per Standing Orders that it was necessary for a majority of the Members present to approve the taking of the motion and that it was necessary for the passing of the motion that not less than 20 Members vote in favour, if required.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Comh. O Curraoin **SECONDED** by Cllr. Finnerty it was **AGREED** by the Elected Members to approve the taking of the above motion.

Cllrs. Thomas, Keane & Feeney raised the following points and queries:

- Designating the new hospital plans as Critical Infrastructure will speed up the delivery of the new hospital buildings.
- Concern was raised as to whether the implementation of this motion might have unforeseen implications.
- It was queried whether a change in the project's status would result in it moving into a different process.
- It was asked from where this request originated from.
- It was responded that the request was received from a member of the hospital board.
- It was pointed out that the request being made is to include the project on a list, before the associated Bill has been passed.
- It was asked what the difference between Strategic Infrastructure and Critical Infrastructure is.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- The Infrastructure Bill is currently before the House of the Oireachtas. The assigned Task Force is identifying means for the State to move critical

infrastructure through the planning system as quickly as possible. Exact details have not yet been released. Secondary legislation will be agreed by cabinet and Government.

Cllrs. Thomas, Keane, Feeney, Geraghty, Keane, & Walsh raised the following points and queries:

- It was suggested that the words 'at the appropriate time' be inserted into the motion.
- The motion is to ensure that the proposed works at Galway University Hospital are placed at the top of the list.
- Legislation should be enacted before this is discussed.
- By sending this motion, the Council are highlighting the existing need in advance of the Bill being enacted.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Suggested that 'when the legislation is enacted' be inserted into the motion.

The motion was amended as follows:

'When the legislation is enacted that Galway County Council writes to the Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, Jack Chambers TD requesting that the new hospital buildings planned for Galway University Hospital – whose development and control plan DCP, has been approved and is ready to be delivered – be designated as Critical Infrastructure (or otherwise given an equivalent strategic priority status) to enable an accelerated pathway for approval, funding allocation, procurement and delivery, in order to address urgent and growing healthcare capacity needs across Galway and the wider West/North-West region.

I would also request that this motion be forwarded to all other Local Authorities in the wider West/North-West region to ask that they also submit this motion or a similar one.'

The amended motion was **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Thomas **SECONDED** by Cllr. Cunniffe and **AGREED**.

Cllrs./ Comh. Cunniffe, Thomas, Donoghue, Leainde, Keane, Regan, O Curraoin, M. Connolly, McHugh Ryan, Geraghty & L. Harney raised the following points and queries:

- A meeting was held recently regarding the future of the Galway Airport Site. The site in question is public land and should not be sold. There must be a public dividend derived from the site.
- A discussion on the future of the site should be had before Expressions of Interest (EOI) are sought.
- Monies can be gained from companies based on the site paying rent. The potential long term financial gain should not be overlooked.
- The Galway Flying Club are left in limbo every year regarding the renewal of their lease.
- The decision on the future of the site will lie with the Elected Members following the completion of the EOI process.
- Preference to keep the site as a working airport was expressed.
- The timeline of the EOI process was asked.
- The matter was discussed at CPG, it was not brought before the Members for decision.
- The contents of the tender documents were queried.
- The site would be suitable for small indigenous companies.
- It was asked how much the current tenants are paying in rent.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- 6 Expressions of Interests (EOIs) have been received and are currently being evaluated by an expert board. It is a requirement that the site be offered to semi state sector before being offered to the private sector.
- The report should be completed by end of May.
- No EOIs have been received from the health sector or the flying club.

- A requirement was set out in the County Development Plan (CDP) for a Masterplan to be prepared for the site in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.
- The Members vision is set out in the County Development Plan and the Executive will ensure that their vision is followed through with.
- The EOI process is currently at a commercially sensitive stage.
- The final decision will be made by the Elected Members of both City and County Councils.
- The Members will be advised once the final report is received. A report will be provided to the Members by the CE and the Members will make the final decision.

Cllrs. Cunniffe & Regan raised the following points and queries:

- There must be a community dividend included in the plans for the site.
- The site should not be sold.
- Towns are in need of playing pitches, this land can provide them.

Cllr. Hoade, Leas Cathaoirleach said that the item will be back in the chamber at either the May or June plenary meeting, a discussion can take place then. It is important to complete the process and then examine the proposal that is put forward.

Cllr. Reddington, Thomas & Hoade raised the following points and queries:

- Made enquiries on the works currently taking place at Parkmore Hill on the N84 Headford Road. Concern was raised that a serious accident may occur as a result.
- It was asked of the Elected Members that they share 'HopeSpace' correspondence on their social media.
- 'HopeSpace' are a fantastic service and their work should be promoted.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by Mr. Finn:

- Explained that these road works are being undertaken by Galway County Council's Project Office. He confirmed that 2 lanes, one left and one right will be retained. The hours of work have been amended. If there are any further queries, he invited them to be directed to himself.

Cllrs. / Comh. Regan, Finnerty, Kelly, O Curraoín raised the following points and queries:

- Concern was raised that the Bishop of Clonfert and the Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, is not permitting remains be reposed in Churches of his diocese, while it is permitted in others.

Members Queries were responded to as follows by the Chief Executive:

- Advised that this request is outside the remit of the Local Authority.

ITEM NO. 19 VOTES OF SYMPATHY / CONGRATULATIONS

4733

A resolution of sympathy was extended to the following:

- Peter Hoey, Ballylee, Peterswell, Co. Galway
- Maria McNamee, Ballylin West, Craughwell, Co. Galway
- Gerard Hall, Ballyboy, Gort, Co. Galway
- The Cannon Family, C/O Cannons, Masonbrook, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- The Cotter Family, Danesfort Drive, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- The Casey Family, Coscorrigh View, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Micheál Moloney & Family, Derrybrien, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Margaret Whelan, Dalystown, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- Tony McDonnell & Family, Moore Street, Loughrea, Co. Galway
- The family of Mattie Cormican, Lakeview, Claregalway, Co. Galway
- The Lenihan Family, Lakeview, Claregalway, Co. Galway

- Máirtín Bheartla Choilm Rua Ó Flatharta, An Gleann Mór, An Cheathrú Rua, Co. na Gaillimhe

Congratulations were extended to the following:

- Corofin Set Dancers: All Ireland Senior Scór Champion Set Dancers

Chriochnaigh an Cruinniú Ansin.

Submitted, Signed and Approved

Cathaoirleach:



Date:


